

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the title beginning at page 1, line 1 with the following amended title:

### EXPANDABLE HARD SUITCASE HAVING MOLDED BASE AND LID PORTIONS AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME

After the title and after the CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS paragraph, which was added by the Preliminary Amendment filed June 2, 2005, please add the following section heading:

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 9 (which published as paragraph [0004] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

Suitcases, can conveniently be considered is as comprising two major types, the first the so-called soft case and the second the so-called hard case.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 14 (which published as paragraph [0006] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

The above mentioned hard skinned cases are regarded as being hard skinned in the sense that the walls, top and bottom are so moulded or otherwise pre-formed as to provide a substantially rigid or hard ~~skinned~~ skin in the sense that the walls, top and bottom are formed by a material that is sufficiently rigid in that it retains its shape and form in use. A material commonly used for forming hard skinned cases is a polypropylene.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 6 (which published as paragraph [0009] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

Bearing in mind that many present day modes of travel, i.e., by aircraft, coach, etc., impose a weight limit upon the amount of luggage an individual passenger may carry, it has been found that whilst the known hard case constructions afford a considerably higher degree of security and resistance to damage, the extra weight of the case imposes considerable limitations upon the actual weight of articles that may be introduced into the case.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 12 (which published as paragraph [0010] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

On the other hand, whilst the lighter weight of the soft case allows more articles to be packed into the case, weight for weight the lesser security afforded by the soft case constructions against damage, deliberate or otherwise, introduces unacceptable content security problems for the traveller.

On page 2, between the paragraph ending at line 15 and the paragraph beginning at line 16 (i.e., between paragraphs [0010] and [0011] of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1), please add the following section heading:

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 16 (which published as paragraph [0011] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

It is an object of the present invention to provide, inter alia, a 'hard' suitcase construction that avoids at least some of the problems arising from the use of the known construction of hard and soft type cases.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 19 (which published as paragraph [0012] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

~~For~~ For the purposes of the present Application a 'hard' case is regarded as being such by reason of the fact that the top, bottom, ~~and~~ side and end walls cannot ~~not~~ readily be pierced by a blade or needle as is the case with known soft case constructions.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 7 (which published as paragraph [0015] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

A further aspect of the invention provides a method of constructing a ~~frame-less~~ frameless 'hard' suitcase characterised by the steps of forming a base portion and a lid portion from a material of such characteristic that the portions retain their formed shape, and attaching to each of said portions the respective zipped portions of a zip fastener arrangement by a stitching operation involving a securing thread.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 13 (which published as paragraph [0016] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

[[A]] According to a further aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of constructing a ~~frame-less~~ frameless 'hard' curvilinear suitcase characterised by the steps of forming a tray like base portion and a tray like lid portion from a material of such characteristics that the base and lid portions retain their intended curvilinear shape, and attaching to the free edge regions of the walls of said tray like portions by a stitching operation using a thread, the respective fastener forming sections of a zip fastener

arrangement for enabling the base and lid portions to be retained in a suitcase closed condition.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 1 (which published as paragraph [0019] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

Conveniently the zip fastener arrangement is a two part Zip fastener arrangement ~~of which a first Zip part~~ In accordance with a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of constructing a hard suitcase including forming a base portion and a lid portion from a material of such characteristic that the portions retain their formed shape, and attaching to each of said portions the respective zipped portions of a zip fastener arrangement by a stitching operation involving a securing thread.

On page 5, between the paragraph ending at line 19 and the paragraph beginning at line 20 (i.e., between paragraphs [0028] and [0029] of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1), please add the following section heading:

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

On page 6, between the paragraph ending at line 12 and the paragraph beginning at line 13 (i.e., between paragraphs [0038] and [0039] of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1), please add the following section heading:

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 1 (which published as paragraph [0041] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

As seen in the orientation of the suitcase as shown in FIGS. 1 to 4, the base portion 1 includes a bottom main surface 3, ~~longer~~ shorter side walls 4 and 5, and ~~shorter~~ longer side walls 6 and 7.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 (which published as paragraph [0044] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

In the embodiment of the suitcase as shown in the Figures, the lid portion is pivotally secured to the base portion by a hinging arrangement 15, schematically shown ~~at (FIG. 4)~~ in FIG. 4, and is maintained in its closed position by a circumscribing Zip fastener arrangement 16 including two operating members 17 which can be set to allow the lid portion 2 to be pivoted to an open position and, when the two operating elements are moved to the positions shown in ~~the~~ FIG. 3, the lid section is held in its closed position as shown. In practice, these members 17 can be such as to accept the ~~hapse~~ hasp of a lock that prevents separation of the members when the lock is in place.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 20 (which published as paragraph [0045] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

The Zip fastener arrangement 16 includes conventional Zip toothed strips/sections 16A and 16B that are connected to the stiffening ribs regions of the base portion and the lid portion by machine stitching. The mode of securing the Zip fastener arrangement to the lid and base sections will be considered in more detail herein after. For the present, it will be noted that the provision of the Zip fastener arrangement 16 with its toothed strips/sections 16A and 16B and operating members 17 mounted to the base and lid portions affords an all ~~round~~ around closure to the case, whilst at the same time, eliminating the need for a tongue and groove engagement region between the lid and base portions and mechanical closures such as locks.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 6 (which published as paragraph [0065] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

Bearing in mind that the material forming the Zip fastener sections/strips is conventionally a woven material, it has been appreciated that for the purposes of avoidance of damage to the woven material in the vicinity of the regions thereof that are stitched to the base and lid portions 1 and 2, and additionally to enhance the appearance of the suitcase, those regions of the Zip fasteners strips/sections that are involved in the stitching process are covered by a cover strip 30 (FIG. 9) that is secured to the associated base and lid portions 1 and 2 by the stitching operation involved in securing the associated Zip fastener section/strip to the base and lid sections of the case.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 10 (which published as paragraph [0070] in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0011437 A1) with the following amended paragraph:

The utilisation of a material to form the base and lid portions that retain their body shape whilst being capable of ~~by~~ being stitched to Zip fastener arrangements has enabled the elimination of internal framing such as conventionally incorporated in the forms of 'hard' cases and has also enabled the elimination of the need for relatively heavy mechanical case locking arrangements together with heavy tongue and groove features conventionally used with the so-called 'hard' cases. This combination has effectively resulted in a hard case construction with significant reduction in weight as compared with equivalently sized conventional 'hard' case.